

# What's a Food Bank?

## California's Emergency Food Network



Food banks are part of an integrated network of organizations that play a critical role in California's food safety net, annually serving some 650 million meals reaching more than 2 million people in need, including children, seniors, veterans, military families, working families, homeless, and people with disabilities. California food banks are national models for their innovative nutrition policies, and frequently a majority of distributed foods are fresh produce.



### The California Association of Food Banks

CAFB serves a statewide role, coordinating semi-trucks full of fresh produce, proteins, and other nutritious foods to food banks. CAFB annually distributes 150 million pounds of donated food from big farmers and other large producers to 43 food banks throughout California.



### Food Banks

Food banks are major regional hubs working in one or more counties that receive over 400 million pounds of food from CAFB, local farmers, grocers, wholesalers, USDA, and other sources. They sort and distribute this food into smaller quantities through their own programs, as well as to more than 6,000 partner agencies.



### Food Pantries & Charitable Agencies

Local agencies—such as food pantries, schools or community centers, faith organizations and dining rooms—receive food from food banks as well as local donations of hot foods from restaurants or caterers and distribute this food directly to people in need. Agencies are the primary point of contact for those in need, either distributing groceries to households to take home and cook, or serving hot meals on site.



### 5 Million Californians in Need

More than 5 million Californians face hunger, including 1 in 4 children. California also has the nation's highest poverty rate after adjusting for our skyrocketing cost of living. That's 6.3 million Californians living in poverty, which goes hand-in-hand with food insecurity.

ENDING  
HUNGER

California Association of Food Banks partners with 43 food banks and over 6,000 local agencies. Our mission is to end hunger in California, and our vision is a well-nourished and hunger-free California, where all people have enough food to lead a healthy life.

Learn more at [cafoodbanks.org](http://cafoodbanks.org) or contact Andrew Cheyne, Policy Director, at [andrew@cafoodbanks.org](mailto:andrew@cafoodbanks.org) or 510.350.9915

